

STONE WALLS



Beckly Blast Furnace

OC 1 '90
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SUMMER 1989
\$2.50

EDITORIAL

As we approach our 15th year of publication, this is our 55th issue, big changes are in the offing. First of all, we are trying to shed the cigar box file in favor of a computerized mailing list. No more hand-addressed magazines and mistakes in LAST COPY inserts, when you hold your cancelled check in your hand. Once the system is perfected the label will tell you when your subscription expires. Thereafter, like your bank or utility company, we can blame it on the computer! (But the computer won't know your subscription is a gift from your brother, that you grew up on Norwich Hill (North Blandford?) or that you will celebrate your 92nd birthday next October.)

The next change will be the price increase which we hope will make up our deficit. The last increase was in 1981. This is a sink or swim move on our part. Which ever way it goes, dear readers, know we've done our level best to keep this ship afloat. Although this is a volunteer effort, hence part-time, it's become a large part of our lives and we've formed friendships that go beyond the publication of the magazine. Do wish us well!

Connie Dorrington

STONE WALLS

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Vol. 15 No. 2

STONE WALLS is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$9.00 a year, \$2.50 for individual copies. Please add 80 cents with a special request for any back issue to be mailed. The retail price of individual copies may be modified only with the permission of the editorial Board. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and illustrations from and about the hilltowns of the Berkshires. The editors of STONE WALLS assume no responsibility for non-commissioned manuscripts, photographs, drawings, or other material. No such material will be returned unless submitted with self addressed envelope and sufficient postage. We also welcome letters from our readers. No portions of this publication may be reproduced in any form, with the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes, without the express consent of the editors of STONE WALLS. Due to the fact that we are a non-profit making publication, we will continue to publish our magazine as long as it is financially possible. If at any time we are unable to continue, we will be under no obligation to refund any subscription.

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Diary of Charles H. Gardner

Part II

*Submitted by Pamela G. Donovan Hall of Huntington and Ann and Richard Gardner of N.C.
Charles H. Gardner was Richard's great uncle.*

Charles H. Gardner was the son of William and Electra (Miller) Gardner. He was born in 1840 in the Knightville section of Norwich (now Huntington). This diary begins when he was living in the Village of Norwich.

APRIL

- Tues. 23, 1861 Very pleasant and very warm drew manure in the forenoon and part of the afternoon drew 3 loads of stone in the afternoon went over to S.R. Hennegurs (sp?) and got a paper sent
- Wed. 24 Cloudy in the forenoon sun shown and back to shower in the afternoon Rained hard in the evening drew and spread manure in the morning ploughed a little in the afternoon sent a paper to A this evening.
- Thurs. 25 Very pleasant mended fence in the forenoon harrowed moved a piece of fence and got out manure etc. in the afternoon C. Otis went to Springfield and enlisted today wish I was going too no letters today Spent 5 cts.
- Fri. 26 Very pleasant ploughed in the morning and drew manure in the afternoon saw mother and C and Eugene a moment today Alexander Dermahten (sp?) was _____ in his all today.
- Sst. 27 Pleasant very warm ploughed and got out manure in the morning have got out 42 loads this week went up to W. Smiths with a load of cider in the afternoon Hugh Shepard in the store etc.
- Sun. 28 Very pleasant went to church had preaching from Mr. Clark from off the hill Cloudy in the afternoon rained some in the evening received a letter from Maria which was written today spent 30
- Mon. 29 Very pleasant went up to Smiths with a load of cider in the morning got out manure in the afternoon went over the bridge and got my paper spent 9
- Tues. 30 Pleasant in the morning cold and showery in the afternoon very windy in the evening ploughed all day with horses and very tired war news is about the same that it has been for a week just finished 1 months work tonight.

MAY

- Wed. 1 Pleasant in the morning rainy and cold in the afternoon ploughed some in the forenoon went up to the distillery and got some barrels and brandy in the afternoon done chores etc. spent 12 cts.
- Thurs. 2 Pleasant but cold and windy very cool in the evening went up to the distillery in the morning ploughed the rest of the day about 1 1/2 acres sent out the paper to Annie this evening spent 07
- Fri. 3 Cloudy in the forenoon pleasant in the afternoon went over to LB Williams and got a load of chips and got out manure at the upper place done chores etc. Mr. Williams was sick with the rheumatism.



Sat. 4 Cloudy in the morning pleasant but cold in the afternoon went up to mill in the morning sowed a piece of oats and dragged them in went to mill again in the afternoon a large flag was raised today spent 2

Sun. 5 Very pleasant done all the chores in the morning took the horse and went up on the hill to church called at Mr. Jones Ellen rode to meeting with me arrived home about 1/2 past 5 o'clock.

Mon. 6 Rained hard all day done the chores and cleaned out the garrut was about sick all day had a toothache all night last night went up to Dr. Bills and had it out this morning paid for the same 25 cents.

Tues. 7 Very pleasant mended fence in the forenoon got out manure in the afternoon done all the chores Mr. Williams is better my jaw is very sore. Very pleasant this evening. spent 8

Wed. 8 Pleasant but cold got out manure in the morning cut down an apple tree and bushed in a piece of grass seed and ploughed a little in the afternoon was over to the store in the evening.

Thurs. 9 Very pleasant harrowed in the forenoon furrowed out a piece for P. Kelly and worked in the garden in the afternoon. quite cool this evening it is report that there has been fighting at Washington today.

Fri. May 10 Pleasant quite warm today this evening worked in the garden in the forenoon and harrowed in a piece of wheat this afternoon. Paid 2 dollars from P. Jones today Spent 0 cts.

Sat. May 11 Rainy and cold cleared out the barn cellar and meal room in the morning made flower beds and set up to back tub in the afternoon bought a pair of shoes spent 18.

Sun. May 12 Pleasant and warm went to church in the morning and evening C. Munson is at home now went over the bridge and got shaved this morning spent 10 cts.

Mon. May 13 Pleasant in the morning rainy and cold in the afternoon ploughed in the afternoon received a letter from Miss Wheeler today.

Tues. May 14 cloudy with some rain planted potatoes and done chores as W. and Mr. Williams have been to Becket to a funeral today was over to the store saw A. Gooch and WP Miller today.

Wed. May 15 Very pleasant drewed manure down to the lower lot helping OBrien get one more load helped Mr. Williams plough done chores and etc. think of writing to Miss Wheeler.

Thurs. May 16 Very pleasant drewed manure and ploughed for OBrien Miss McDarby died this morning sent a paper to Miss Wheeler this evening it is quite cool this evening spent 4 cts.

Fri. May 17 Pleasant but quite cool drewed manure in the forenoon drugged with cattel in the afternoon Old Pat Kelley worked her this pm spent 2 cts.

Sat. May 18 Pleasant drugged all day finished work about 4 oclock done the chores and split wood for Miss McDarby went over to the depot spent 3

Sun., May 19 Very pleasant went to a catholic meeting in the morning and up Baptist Church in the afternoon called at Miss McDarby in the even.

Mon. May 20 Cloudy ploughed manure and doing done chores went out to S.R. Henigans and got a paper wife died last night funeral tomorrow.

Tues. May 21 Cloudy and windy planted corn and drewed manure went to _____ in the _____ Spent 22

Wed. May 22 Quite pleasant worked as yesterday in the corn field called on Miss McDarby this evening and loaned her a paper it is quite cool but very pleasant.

Thurs. May 23 Very pleasant and warm got out manure and had 4 hands to help us Planted a large piece had a chat with Miss McDarby sent a paper to Miss Wheeler spent 10

Fri. May 24 Pleasant but some signs of storm this evening helped J_____ plough his garden and got out manure in the morning worked in the garden etc. Spent 12.

Sat. May 25 Showery in the AM pleasant and warm with a shower in the afternoon Worked at the upper place all day went up home in the evening. Spent 3 ct.

Sun. May 26 Very pleasant went to church on the hill all day went down to W.P. Millers after meeting and down to the village in the evening M.W. came here

Mon. May 27 Rained hard in the am cloudy with some rain the the pm cleared out the cellar in the forenoon ploughed and got out manure in the pm wind blew in the evening.

Tues. May 28 Quite pleasant but very windy mended fence and got out manure and drugged in the forenoon drugged and got out manure in the pm spent the evening home.

Wed. May 29 Rainy in the am cloudy and cool in the pm quite cool in the evening done chores and got out manure in the am planted potatoes in the pm received a letter from Maria today.

Thurs. May 30 Pleasant very fair planted and ploughed a small piece in the forenoon got out manure and drugged in the pm went down to Kellys and got him to mend my pants. spent 4 cts.

Fri. May 31 Very pleasant and warm planted and went up on the mountain in the forenoon worked in the garden in the pm spent the evening over at the star.

JUNE

Sat. 1 Very pleasant and warm planted beans in the forenoon and went up to Chester in the PM went down to Kellys in the evening walked home with Miss W.

Sun. 2 Pleasant and quite warm showery in the evening went to church all day got shaved in the am wrote a letter to Maria today spent 14 ct. yesterday and 11 today.

Mon. 3 Rainy in the am clear in the pm had a shower in the evening cleaned out stables picked over potatoes in the am went hunting and planted in the pm went over to S.R. Hanigans and got a paper.

Tues. 4 Cloudy but quite warm planted beans in the forenoon hoed potatoes in the pm went over to the store in the evening had quite a chat with Miss Young spent 1 c.

Wed. 5 Pleasant and warm hoed potatoes in the forenoon sowed ashes in the wheat and got out manure in the pm went over to PO with some papers for Miss Wheeler in the evening.

Thurs. 6 Rained hard in the forenoon cloudy and rainy in the pm done chores in the forenoon helped the women folks make soap etc. Mr. Williams has been gone all day spent 4 cts.

Fri. 7 Cloudy in the am pleasant and warm in the pm went up on the mountain and salted the cattle got out manure polled beans Miss Williams came here spent 42

Sat. 8 Rainy and cloudy all day spread manure and ploughed and harrowed ADR, LS, HJ, JC, CO and AR left here for they are sent of war today was at home this even.

- Sun. 9 Pleasant but quite warm did not attend church today Mr. Bisbee from Worthington preached done the chores and walked out with Miss Young a little ways went up to my room at 8 oclock.
- Mon. 10 Pleasant but very warm in the am cloudy in the pm had a light shower in the evening got out manure in the forenoon worked on the roads in the pm spent 12
- Tues. 11 Cloudy all day with thunder in the evening worked on the roads all day had some fun with an irishman. Saw WP Merritt this week expected some letters today but was disappointed.
- Wed. 12 Pleasant worked on the road and finished that job today intend to haul corn tomorrow if pleasant sent a paper to Miss Wheeler tonight spent 7
- Thurs. 13 Pleasant and cool wind haul corn all day C. Munson helped us haul a large piece went over to the post office in the evening Frank Drake is here tonight paid the cigars to Burdick spent 3 cts.
- Fri. 14 Very pleasant hauled corn and finished that job went in swimming and had my hair cut this evening went up on the mountain and salted the cattle this pm.
- Sat. 15 Pleasant and warm hoed potatoes in the am and hoed in the garden in the pm went up home in the evening G. Samuels arrival from N.Y. today spt. 10
- Sun. 16 Very pleasant and warm in the am pleasant but cooler in the evening saw girls today which have not seen for a _____ before called at M.G. and saw the girls.
- Mon. 17 Pleasant but cool _____ this am and _____ turfs into the barnyard in the pm went over to SR. Hanigans and got a paper this evening carried a bundle of clothes for Mrs. Otis.
- Tues. 18 Very pleasant ploughed and spread Hay in the turned and raked hay an drewed 3 loads of _____ in the afternoon it is getting very dry here
- Wed. 19 Very pleasant trimmed apple trees and tented hay turned raked and got in hay in the pm went up to G.L. and saw S. Phelps this evening spent 4 cts.
- Thurs. 20 Very pleasant and warm set out cabbage _____ and _____ trees in the forenoon hoed corn in the pm sent in paper to Mrs. Wheeler spent 1 ct.
- Fri. 21 Cloudy nearly all day hoed potatoes in the am salted cattle picked strawberries and killed _____ in the afternoon Whitman and Lucy arrived home this evening.
- Sat. 22 Very pleasant ploughed with the horses in the AM went strawberrying with Lucy this PM went in swimming there evening it is very pleasant spent 10 cents
- Sun. 23 Very pleasant with a shower in the PM went to the baptist church to meeting and down the rail in the evening saw Miss Young this evening
- Mon. 24 Pleasant and cool with a pleasant evening worked in the corn field putting ashes on the corn went over to the paper mill and got a load of ashes spent 2
- Tues. 25 Pleasant and very warm worked in the garden in the AM put ashes around the corn and chopped wood in the PM it is getting very dry here about
- Wed. 26 Pleasant and hot in the forenoon cloudy in the PM and evening worked at haying all day very tired this evening a little boy got hurt by the cars this evening
- Thurs. 27 Pleasant with a cool wind worked in the hay field all day am quite tired and not very well this evening saw A. Gooch and wife this evening
- Fri. 28 Pleasant and very warm with a shower in the PM have not been able to work much today but feel better this evening saw A. Kingsley and J. _____ this PM it is cool and pleasant this evening

Sat. 29 Pleasant and warm worked in the hayfield with E. Hunter and J.H. & got alot of hay out paid EN Woods for the pair of shoes and received 5 dollars from H.W. spent 10

Sun. 30 Pleasant and warm in the AM warm and cloudy in the forenoon went to E.D.A. and saw the girls had Mr. Ware's horse spent _4 cents

JULY

Mon. 1 Pleasant in the AM with a shower in the evening mowed with Hennifer (?) and E. Lyman in the forenoon got in hay and had corn in the PM

Tues. 2 Rainy in the AM cloudy with a shower in the evening mowed some straw and sat out cabbage plants _____ potatoes done chores read papers etc. spent 6 cts.

Wed. 3 Cloudy in the AM pleasant with a cool wind in the PM hoed corn and stirred hay in the forenoon got in hay and _____ horse rake in the PM

Thurs. 4 Pleasant and very warm worked in the hay field all day the celebration came off in all its glory saw Miss Young this evening spent the sum of 4 cents

Fri. 5 Very warm and hot worked in the hay field all day had a little trouble with OBrien but no lives lost walked out this evening and saw _____ fireworks it is very warm this evening

Sat. 6 Very warm and pleasant commensed haying at the upper place and finished out horse to day went up house with W.P. Miller and staid all night spent 31

Sun. 7 Pleasant but oh how warm this AM was up to 92 above 0 in the shade Went to church on the hill saw two ladies from C and the Jones girls

Mon. 8 The hottest day of the season and very _____ worked in the hayfield what time I worked went over the bridge and got a paper etc.

Tues. 9 Warmer and warmer grows the weather and up _____ worked a light storm this evening _____ hay as usual E. Hunter is not going to work anymore spent 6 cents _____ from Jones 2 dollars.

Wed. 10 Pleasant with a cool wind Mr. Williams and myself mowed in the AM got in three loads of hay and raked in the forenoon spent 3 cents.

Thurs. 11 Cloudy in the AM pleasant and warm in the PM got in 2 loads of hay went hunting worked in the garden in the AM hoed corn in the PM Spent 12

Fri. 12 Pleasant with a cool breeze worked at haying some loafed some done some chores etc. expect to finish haying tomorrow it is quite pleasant this evening with a new moon.

Sat. 13 Pleasant and cool finished haying in good shape all feel first rate it is raining nicely this evening which is very much needed saw E. Jones and rode out with here today spent 12 cts.

Sun. 14 Rainy nearly all day have not gone to church today wrote a letter to Maria today went over to Mrs. Otis a little while in the evening got a paper this evening spent 11 sent a letter to Maria.

Mon. 15 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM went up to Chester after the d _____ for Mr. Munson in the AM hoed turnips in the PM a letter from H.M.R.

Tues. 16 Pleasant and cool hoed potatoes all day C. Munson is quite sick but is better tonight expect to go to _____ it is pleasant this even.

Wed. 17 Very pleasant went over to Chesterfield and sold three herd of cattle _____ home about 5 oclock rode Mr. Munson horse this even.

Thurs. 18 Pleasant and warm hoed potatoes and done chores in the AM worked in the garden in the PM saw a fine old irish gentleman

Fri. 19 Pleasant and warm with a shower in the PM hoed potatoes and done chores a peddler called here tonight rode out the pony this evening

Sat. 20 Rained hard in the AM cleared off very pleasant in the PM worked in the cellar and hauled ashes in the evening hoed in PM received a letter from Ann to day spent 20 cents.

Sun. 21 Pleasant with a cool breeze attended church part of the day went up home in the evening rode out with S. Jones and H. Smith had a nice ride it was very pleasant spent 6 cents.

Mon. 22 Pleasant with some signs of rain in the evening cradled rye in the forenoon went on the mountain and got the cattle and started for C in the PM staid at W. Millers at night.

Tues. 23 Very pleasant arrived in C with the cattle about 7 AM looked around town in the AM saw 2 b____ butchered and came up in the evening train spent 56 cts.

Wed. 24 Cloudy nearly all day pleasant in the evening done chores and bound rye in the forenoon drew logs from the upper place in the PM broke down a cart this PM

Thurs. 25 Pleasant and warm storm and bound rye in the AM got in rye and done chores in the PM went over the bridge in the evening

Fri. 26 Very pleasant all day took down the old slaughter house in the AM drew and ____ at ____ in the PM saw P.G. White this evening

Sat. 27 Very pleasant and warm drew lumber from the upper place in the forenoon worked in the building in the PM went up street in the even. spent 47 cents.

Sun. 28 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM evening went to church half a day wrote a letter to H.M. Reed and Mrs. Wheeler today.

Mon. 29 Rainy with considerable thunder in the AM cloudy with a shower in the PM went fishing in the forenoon hoed in the garden in the PM

Tues. 30 Pleasant and warm drew shingles and boards from the upper place in the forenoon drew stone in the PM went down the railroad in the even.

Wed. 31 The last day of ____ and how hot but although there is a prospect of a shower the evening worked around the old slaughter house and salted the young cattle.

AUGUST

Thurs. 1 Very pleasant and hot drew dirt ____ the yard at the upper place in the AM and 2 loads of shavings from W.A. Little shop in PM

Fri. 2 Still continues pleasant and very warm drew ____ ____ the yard all day A. Co. guards returned from Fortress Monroe today they felt first rate

Sat. 3 Pleasant but hot the mercury is up to 100 degrees in the shade helped unload a load of salt but a little and loafed the rest of the time went up home in evening spent 20

Sun. 4 Still continues pleasant and very warm went to church all day saw Miss Jones and all the rest of the folks had a nice ride from there this even.

Mon. 5 Pleasant with a shower about noon have been quite sick all day but do not recollect much about it Father and Mother came down the PM and spent the night here

Tues. 6 Very pleasant and quite cool came up home this AM got pretty tired but feel much better than I did yesterday think I shall recover soon spent 1 cent

Wed. 7 Cloudy with some rain felt much better than I did yesterday Mr. and Mrs. Williams came up here today to see me staid an hour

Thurs. 8 Cloudy and rained all day went down to W.P. Millers in the AM and staid all day do not feel quite as well as I did yesterday J.P. White called here

Fri. 9 Still continues cloudy with some rain staid up in the hollow until almost night and then came down to S.S. Millers where I remained all

Sat. 10 Cloudy in the AM pleasant and warm in the PM went down to the village in the AM and up to Carringtons after cattle in the AM spent 18¢

Sun. 11 Very pleasant with a cool breeze did not attend church today went up to W.P. Millers in the evening A.D. Rude came home last even.

Mon. 12 Very pleasant and quite cool went to Chicopee with cattle got considerable tired arrived home after 8 PM spent the sum of 10¢

Tues. 13 Rained hard all day went down to Knightville and saw A.P. Merritt called at L.M. and M.P staid all night it is quite cool this

Wed. 14 Cloudy in the AM Pleasant in the PM went down to the village in the forenoon and up to W.P. Millers in the PM spent 31 cents.

Thurs. 15 Very pleasant went up to Savoy called at J.A.. Nash and took dinner arrived at Savoy about 5 PM had a fine time it _____ very pleasant

Fri. 16 Very pleasant all day went up to J.S. upper place and staid most of the AM had a _____ and went with Marcus school in the PM rode out in the evening

Sat. 17 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM started for home and stopped at Plainfield and Cummington saw Miss _____ got home about 5 PM spent 9

Sun. 18 Very pleasant and warm went to church all day went down to Deacon Jones at noon saw the girls and got some dinner went over to the village in the evening

Mon. 19 Pleasant and warm mowed oats bound and got in wheat in the AM worked at the upper place in the PM my arms are still very sore

Tues. 20 Quite pleasant but quite warm helped do the chores in the AM rode up to Chester _____ called at Mr. Jones and went over home at night spent 22 cents

Wed. 21 Pleasant but quite warm helped do the chores in the AM rode to Chester _____ called at Mr. Jones and went over home at night spent 22 cents

Thurs. 22 Pleasant all day went down to where the folks were at work called at L.S. Millers saw Miss Cole and Miss Snow my arm troubled me very much saw E. Miller today

Fri. 23 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM E. Miller folks left for home went up to the Deacons this evening

Sat. 24 Pleasant but warm called at Millers AM went up to Chester _____ with cattle A?P? Merritt called at Whites, Merritt and Millers spent 33 cents

Sun. 25 Very pleasant and warm did not attend church today on account of a sore arm called at Deacon Lymans _____ in the evening is pleasant

Mon. 26 Pleasant but hot went _____ the river and up to J.L. Jr. in the evening Mrs. Lyman died this AM went down to the village and had my arm _____ spent 26

Tues. 27 Pleasant and warm came down from the hollow called at L. Millers in the forenoon called at J.B.L. Jr. and went to E. Jones school called at M.J.

Wed. 28 Very pleasant and warm went to J.B.L. Jr. the AM and over to L.M. went to the funeral in the PM Miss Carrington came down here this PM

Thurs. 29 Pleasant in the AM cloudy in the PM went up to Chesterfield and got some lumber in the AM went up to Chesterfield in the PM arrived here 8 o'clock

Fri. 30 Very pleasant at 12:00 started for _____ arrived about 6 started and arrived home about 7 oclock went up to Chesterfield with Miss Carrington in the PM spent 11 cents

Sat. 31 Pleasant and cool called at Millers in the AM went to the auction and went up to Millers to supper went home with Miss Carrington

SEPTEMBER

Sun. 1 Pleasant and cool went to church all day Miss Carrington left here this AM S. Clark was at church today went down home this evening it is pleasant

Mon. 2 Cloudy in the AM mowed _____ and split wood in the AM went up on the mountain in the PM it has cleared off saw WP Merritt tonight and lent him 10 dollars

Tues. 3 Cloudy all day done chores in AM looked after the steers from 8 til 3 in the PM went over to G. Munsons lot to find the bull this PM it is very dark this evening

Wed. 4 Cloudy and cool in the AM pleasant and warm in the PM mowed and spread _____ and split wood in the AM got in 1 load and _____ the rest in the PM

Thurs. 5 Very fair pleasant and cool worked at haying as usual went up and got down the bull with E.H. _____ horse saw AP Merritt and J.G.

Fri. 6 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM worked at haying some and loafed the rest of the day used both _____ bull and saw the horse guards drill

Sat. 7 Very pleasant worked around the barn and ploughed in the AM finished ploughing in the PM Mr. and Mrs. Munson had a son born this AM which weighed 11 pound spent 20

Sun. 8 One of the first days of the season did not attend church on account of having broked _____ my _____ walked out with Whit in the AM went to a _____ in the evening

Mon. 9 Pleasant in the AM cloudy in the PM rained a little in the evening done all the chores and drawed dirt in the barnyard all day Mr. Bulluv (?) staid here tonight

Tues. 10 Weather as yesterday and in the earlier part of the day cloudy in the latter worked at drawing dirt again today spent 7 cents

Wed. 11 Rained hard nearly all day did not do much but chores today saw W.F. Wilder and wife today reached my 21st birthday today

Thurs. 12 Very pleasant drawed 3 loads of shingles from W.A. Little shop 1 load of dirt and 10 _____ of ashes from the paper mill and _____ a _____ piece of fence spent 10

Fri. 13 Very pleasant and warm worked with the team harrowing all day went up to H.H. Billarys after the cattle which _____ out went over to the depot this evening

Sat. 14 Pleasant and quite warm went down to cutting corn in the AM but was taken with the colic from which I suffer it very much but was relieved before night

Sun. 15 Very warm and pleasant arm pretty lame but feel considerable better that I did yesterday the Dr. gave me _____ tonight which makes me feel much better spent 4 cents.

Mon. 16 Pleasant and quite warm felt rather bad all day did not do much but chores went to town meeting in the PM and up home in the evening spent 9 cents

Tues. 17 Cloudy in the AM rainy and cool in the PM done chores and loafed all day went over to the depot in the evening and carried G. Munson home spent 7 cents

Wed. 18 Cloudy all day settled with Mr. Williams in the AM called at Mr. Jones and took dinner came home went down to WP Miller where I staid all night

Thurs. 19 Cloudy in the AM pleasant in the PM very pleasant in the evening went over to Munsons and to the village spent _____

Fri. 20 Very pleasant and very warm came home this AM and staid till after dinner went up on the hill and got my boots mended called on Mr. Jones people

Sat. 21 Very pleasant and warm went up to W.P. and L.S. Millers in the AM and down to the village after my things called at Mr. Angells etc. spent 5

Sun. 22 Cloudy with a raw cold wind attended church all day intend to start for Boston tomorrow B.B. and G promised to write to me P Lyman and E.A. called here

Mon. 23 Very pleasant but warm cool in the evening drilled 6 hour today there is rather a hard lot of boys here two boys got out of camp for refusing to take _____ up all _____

Wed. 25 Still continues pleasant and warm with cool nights Drilled nearly all day wrote home today had some _____ in the evening did not like to the dress parade in the PM

Thurs. 26 Fast day no drill today weather continues very pleasant and warm staid out guard all day _____ got up at night but _____ cold _____

Fri. 27 Cloudy with a raw cool wind rained in _____ off from guard duty early this AM and did not have anything to do all day 25 horses on the ground

Sat. 28 Rained in the AM pleasant in the PM drilled 6 hours and laid still there rest of the time was taken quite sick in the evening but was well _____ off

Sun. 29 Pleasant and warm was confined to my bed nearly all day the Doctor came down _____ each but did not give me any medicine the cars run regular here nearly all day

Mon. 30 Cloudy nearly all day went up to the tent in the AM in which I remained nearly all day went up and saw the doctor in the evening and got excused from duty for 2 days

OCTOBER

Tues. 1 Very pleasant and warm went up to Boston in the AM looked around on the wharves and south Boston and back to camp about noon did not drill in the PM the Doctor gave me leave of not doing _____ duty

Wed. 2 Pleasant and warm cloudy in the PM did not go on duty today but shall tomorrow There is considerable excitement here about the _____ leave _____ to the families of volunteers

Thurs. 3 Very pleasant and warm attended roll call and drill went up to Dedham with H.R.R. Collins staid a spell and came back about noon went on dress parade in the PM

Fri. 4 Pleasant and very warm cloudy in the evening rained hard in the night stood guard 24 hours but did not get very wet. P. Prouth got badly scalded this PM

Sat. 5 Rained very hard in the AM dark and showery the rest of the day came off guard about 10 AM fishing a little while changed quarters this PM feel first rate today

Sun. 6 Pleasant and warm although it was cloudy in the AM attended roll call and the like read some _____ wrote a letter to Fordyce was not very well this evening

Mon. 7 Pleasant and warm was appointed a member of the fatigue duty guard and buildings had a little sabre exercise in the PM cloudy in evening

Tues. 8 Rained hard in the AM cloudy and showery the rest of the day went up to Dedham in the AM with LL Price and P. Sampson drilled what time was between showers

Wed. 9 Very pleasant but cold in the evening but was warmer before morning drill nearly all day went down to the barn and saw the horses of which 50 came into camp today

To be continued next issue

DEATH OF DR. LUCAS

Chester's Benefactor Passes Away at Franklin, N.C.

Compiled by Grace Wheeler

In the death of Dr. Herman S. Lucas which occurred Tuesday at Franklin, N.C. passed away a man who had done more for Chester Village than any other for he was the creator of an industry out of undeveloped resources, and whose memory will long continue in this region. For 34 years he was a practicing physician with a long hard ride and was much esteemed by people as a master of his profession. But he was an exceedingly energetic man and found time in addition to his vocation to mix in political and social affairs, holding town offices, helping along the churches, etc., and in the meantime pursuing the scientific experiments and geological studies that had always been his delight, and which ultimately brought him a name and fortune. He made an exhaustive study of the minerals of all the surrounding county from a practical side and no man had a deeper knowledge of what was hidden in these hills than he.

Dr. Lucas was born at Blandford September 10, 1817, but early moved with his parents to Canaan, N.Y., where his boyhood was spent. Here he worked upon his father's farm and attended the district school, his only other educational advantages being two terms at Wilbraham Academy, where he gave special attention to scientific subjects. At 23 he entered the office of Dr. John Merriam at Canaan to commence the study of medicine, teaching school a part of the time to enable him to attend lectures at the Berkshire Medical Institution in Pittsfield where he graduated in 1842. While at the institution he studied dentistry with Dr. Willard Clough of that town and afterward practiced this branch of his profession at South Lee for a year. In 1843 he married Maria A. Kendall of Pittsfield and the following year he moved to Chester, combining the practice of medicine and den-

tistry. Here he ministered to the bodily ills of the community for over a generation. To him came the emoluments and tokens of appreciation that are the accompaniments of the career of a faithful physician. This is considered enough for most men but not so for Dr. Lucas.

At an age when he naturally would have been thinking of retirement and taking his ease he was embarking on a new career.

The earliest fruits of Dr. Lucas' scientific investigation was the discovery of a method of making gelatinous silica and Epsom salts by the decomposition of serpentine rock. Later he found a way of making mineral paint. A company was formed for its manufacture, commencing business here but shortly removing to Springfield, where it continues to the present time at the Hampden Paint and Chemical Company. In 1856 he discovered what was supposed to be a large deposit of iron but which turned out to be a mixture of iron and the emery that has contributed so materially to the growth of this village. During the following year, 1200 tons of it were taken out and shipped to the furnaces at Stockbridge, Lenox and Hudson, N.Y.

The financial crisis of 1857 compelled the doctor to discontinue the working of the mine until 1863 when, in connection with his brother, John E. Lucas, and Henry D. Wilcox he reopened it. A blast furnace and forge were erected and the manufacture of iron was commenced here. The results were far from satisfactory as the ore proved intractable. After making a more thorough examination of the mineral the doctor discovered on September 6, 1864, that it contained a larger percentage of emery. This mineral had been hitherto unknown in the United States and up to the present time no other discoveries of emery have been made in sufficiently large deposits



Herman S. Lucas

to pay for working. Had this discovery been made a few years earlier a much greater benefit would have been derived as the government experienced the greatest difficulty in obtaining emery during the first year of the war, as the English and the French governments had a monopoly of the mines near Smyrna in Asia Minor and Archipelago. In this dilemma the Chester emery was utilized and the government works were supplied from it for a considerable time. The Hampden Emery Company was formed by Dr. Lucas, Charles Alden and H.D. Wilcox, but the two latter soon retired and the doctor continued on alone. Questions arose involving the business in litigation and the operation of the mines was suspended, but he continued in business, getting his material from Turkey.

Early in the seventies Nathan A. Harwood became associated with him and since then the industry has had an uninterrupted course of prosperity and growth. It is often a debated question which of the two deserve the larger meed of the praise for the results accomplished. The truth is one was indispensable to the other. Dr. Lucas possessed the genius to bring to light and the patience to investigate hidden things, while Mr. Harwood had to an unusual degree the talents to

organize and turn these to account.

The growth of the company is of too recent occurrence to need enlarging upon. The past 20 years Dr. Lucas has spent prospecting in the South, where his discoveries have resulted in the opening up of several corundum mines which were absorbed by the Hampden Emery and Corundum Company, of which he was so long president and Mr. Harwood treasurer. Four years ago he retired from the company disposing of his interest to Frank E. and George H. Bidwell. Even then he could not stop work, for after building the stone building on Middlefield Street, where he intended to display his collection of minerals and lecture on the subject, he suddenly returned south and has continued there following up his explorations whenever possible. He never forgot his love for Chester and the churches, charities and all public objects found in him a liberal and hearty sympathizer. The funeral service was held at Franklin Thursday and interment was there.

Dr. Lucas died on June 20, 1900. Information for this article was taken from Evert History of the Connecticut Valley and the Springfield Morning Union



Aaron Stevens

letter to Mrs. Tomer.

*Dear friend you must remember
Not many years ago,
You sent to me for counsel
To mitigate your woe.*

*Now I'm the one afflicted
Therefore I come to you
To ask you for your counsel
To tell me what to do.*

*And first I'll frankly tell you
Though humbling tis to me,
That I was very foolish
As you will shortly see.*

*For I without reflection
Or thinking what to do,
Have kissed another maiden
And she's bound to put me through.*

*But when you hear my story,
How it was brought about
I think you will not blame me
But try to help me out.*

*When first I saw this maiden
So beautiful and gay
She sat at the piano,
And splendidly did play.*

*Her music was entrancing
Her singing like a bird,
I could but feel enchanted
At every strain I heard,*

*And when her song was ended,
(I do not mean to boast,)
I straight way condescended
To offer her a toast.*

*But all my thoughts were scattered,
My heart began to swell,
I stammered out the following
As near as I can tell,*

*"To her who gave us music
While here tonight we've tarried,
I move she has a husband
Whenever she gets married."*

*And quickly she responded
As though she wa'nt afraid
And seconded the motion
As soon as it was made.*

*I stood spellbound and speechless
As all were gazing at her,
'Twas then and there I kissed her
And that is what's the matter.*

*So now I'm deep in trouble
But if you're good and true
I know that you will help me
And see this matter through.*

*Now had I better tell her
That I her pity crave,
And like an honest fellow
Take back the kiss I gave?*

*For rather than to swing
As Haman did of old,
For such a little thing
I'd make it up four fold.*

*Or had I better travel
As Jeff did when he ran
And leave her to scratch gravel
And catch me if she can?*

*Your afflicted friend,
Aaron*

Yesterday's Letters

By Harriet Gilman

Reading a box of old family letters spanning years 1854 to 1879, written or received by folks on farms in the Chester Hill area enabled me to enter the lives of some of my ancestors and their daily concerns, as well as learn a bit of the history of that time.

In large families, children were often sent away to live with or work for relatives. Great Grandfather's sister went to live with an uncle in New York State. Before he married, he wrote her about his intended marriage.

April 1854

Dear Sister,

You request me to give you some information respecting Miss Harriet. She resides in the town of Bozrah about three miles from Norwich Landing. She is so far as I can learn a lady of unblemished character, has been a member of the church in that place nearly ten years, says she shall bring a letter from there and join here, and wishes me to join at the same time. The eleventh of May I now expect will be the day. I shall go down the tenth, and expect to return on the fourteenth. You say you had a hint that the neighbors were much interested in the affair. You well know that would be the case in Chester. You are also well assured by living with me some four or five years that what they said would make but little difference with me in choosing a companion for life. I have endeavored to be guided by a higher power than man, one that seeth the end from the beginning. Thus I have I trust been led to make the choice I have in a companion to share with me the troubles and enjoyments of this short state of existence in this world.

My other great grandfather writes from his Civil War posts in Newberne, and Plymouth, North Carolina to his future wife.

December 1862

Dear Friend Ellen,

Co. C came to this place to do picket duty, I have been on three times, have not seen a single Reb yet. They are some twenty miles west of here but will not trouble us as long as this cold weather lasts. It is tough standing duty these cold nights but one has got to be tough to go to war.

April 1863

I am well as could be expected. We have a great many sick ones. There is someone going to the hospital every day. I am very sorry to say it but when we left Camp Banks, our regiment numbered 900 effective men. Now we can't bring against the enemy 500. It is true that ten die of sickness where one is killed by the bullets of the enemy. (He once described sleeping conditions as "sleeping on the soft side of a board.")

Abraham Lincoln was assassinated April 14, 1865. Great Grandfather, a Civil War Veteran, received a letter from his cousin—a letter edged in black. . .

May 1, 1865

Dear Cousin,

I hastily respond to your sentiments on the death of our much lamented and loved President. I did not suppose there could exist a man so base of heart to plan so murderous a deed. George Washington. . . the Father of his Country, Jefferson Davis, the Destroyer of his Country, Abraham Lincoln, the Redeemer of his Country. Illinois received his murdered but glorified son, While we mourn our common loss, let us have confidence in Andrew Johnson hoping and trusting he will carry on the good work begun.

Current feeling regarding the Civil War is expressed in a letter from an 80 year old uncle.

January 1864

Dear Nephew,

Among the allusions you have made to the War you say you think the tide of emigration will be South when this war closes and this a reason why our Western lands should be sold before that event takes place. This to me is a new idea and I think it must be founded on the supposition that the rebel lands of the South will be confiscated and that the Inhabitants of the North will move to the South to become their occupants. But unfortunately the constitution stands in the way. That says in plain words that "attainder of treason shall not work corruption of blood or forfeiture of property" ..But the constitution has long since been disregarded and treated as a blank. You are very well aware that our war has for some time and is still progressing for very different purposes from what they were when it commenced. In our Governor's late message to our legislature he says faith to our Armies and to our citizens demands that we keep sacred the solemn pledge made to our people and to the civilized world when we engaged in this bloody war. Here follows the pledge: That it was not waged in any spirit of oppression or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with; the rights of established institutions in those states but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the constitution and to preserve the Union with all its dignity equality and rights of the several states unimpaired; and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease . . .

You remember that the Abolition Committee from Chicago called on him and seduced him from his original course—and at the time he admitted that it was contradictory to his better judgment but to keep his political party united and retain the power of the government he gave way. . . The war is to progress until these new purposes shall be answered and it will be lengthened out indefinitely and the first tide of emigration after battles shall cease will probably be a standing army to keep them in subjugation.

Well we are all in the same ship and must sink

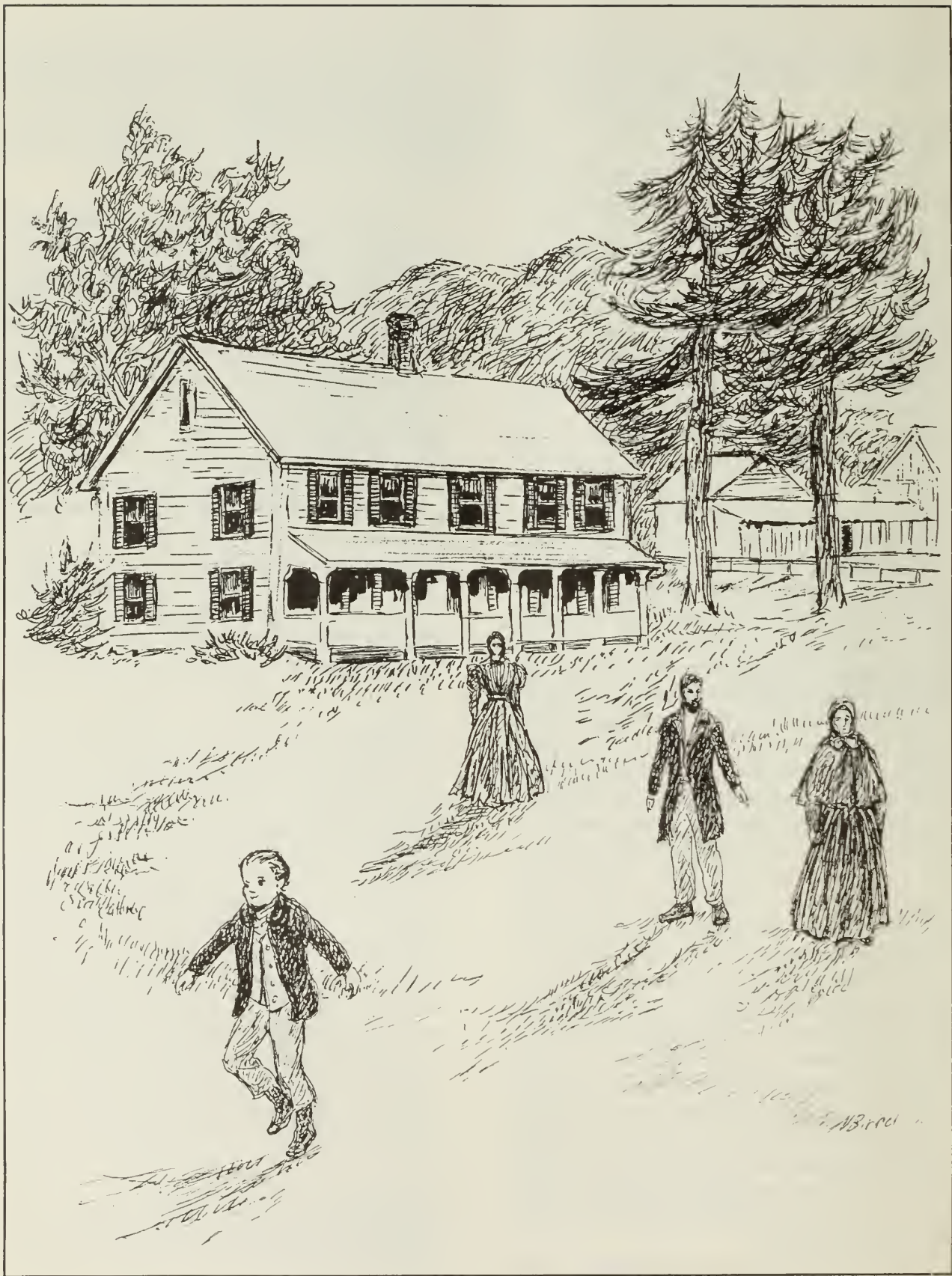
or swim together. We have become so wicked and corrupt in all the branches of our government and in our whole nation that we have reason to fear that God will let us alone to destroy ourselves and it should be our united petition that He will not let this catastrophe come upon us.

In those days it was greatly desired that the majority of one's offspring be boys so that the arduous tasks required for farming these rocky hills could be hastened . . . When these boys grew to manhood they needed a piece of the old farm on which to establish their own homes. Soon they ran out of acreage. They must buy more land or go West where land was free and more fertile. The Homestead Act was established in 1862 but even before that time, in 1855, two newly-wed couples emigrated across the prairie to established ranches in California, near Stockton. These families, according to glowing accounts, were most happy there, entreating the brothers and sisters to come out. In 1869 the transcontinental railroad was completed, attracting more emigrants.

Year 1869

Dear Sister Ellen,

I want you to send Ed out to take up a 160 acre place at \$1.25 in greenbacks. California land has advanced within a year from five to ten dollars an acre but there is government land here yet at 1.25 that is to preempt a claim of 160 acres. A person has to go onto the land and eat and sleep on it and put up a few boards and in three months prove up and pay for it. I have bought my railroad land. I had to pay \$12 an acre for it. Father said he would come to see us when the railroad was done and that is most finished. (Wife Eliza adds a few lines) Edie and Allen have got nearly over the whooping cough. I tell you I am thankful, too. They had it very hard and so did Josephine. She is 13 years old. She does the dishes but I have to scold her once in a while. I should like to come East and visit all of you, but I do not anticipate going home so much as I used to since we have buried Georgie. I thought it was hard to lose sisters but it's nothing compared to losing a child.



July 1874

Dear Sister Ellen,

I wish you could have some of our pears. I measured one and it was 14 inches around and weighed one pound. I wish you were but here now to get some of our apricots. We are cutting and drying them today. I have lived 19 years in California and am not tired of it yet. We hear of no complaints of hard times here.

Year 1875 (Lodi, California)

Emigrants are coming here by the thousands. I suppose Father has given up the idea of coming to see us. We had a Grange Picnic in Lodi on the 28th of April and it was a pleasant day, calculate there were 700 there.

Those who stayed on the old farm exhorted the value of hard work in true Yankee fashion. Great Grandfather writes to his son who has just commenced a career as teacher.

October 19, 1873

Dear Son,

You write that you are at the school early and late which indicates labour. If we would win the prize either in the school or on the farm, it is the secret of success and is what we are here for.

This good father tried to bring the news of home and community to a son far from home.

October 20, 1873

Dear Son,

Orrin Beach has commenced trapping foxes, so I hope he will be the defender of our turkeys. Merit Bell has negotiated with Fanny Quigley so I expect to see him out to church with a beautiful wife soon. Levi has taken quarters at Widow Hamilton's old house. He has bought a splendid beaver hat and don't know what to do with it Sundays when he gets to church.

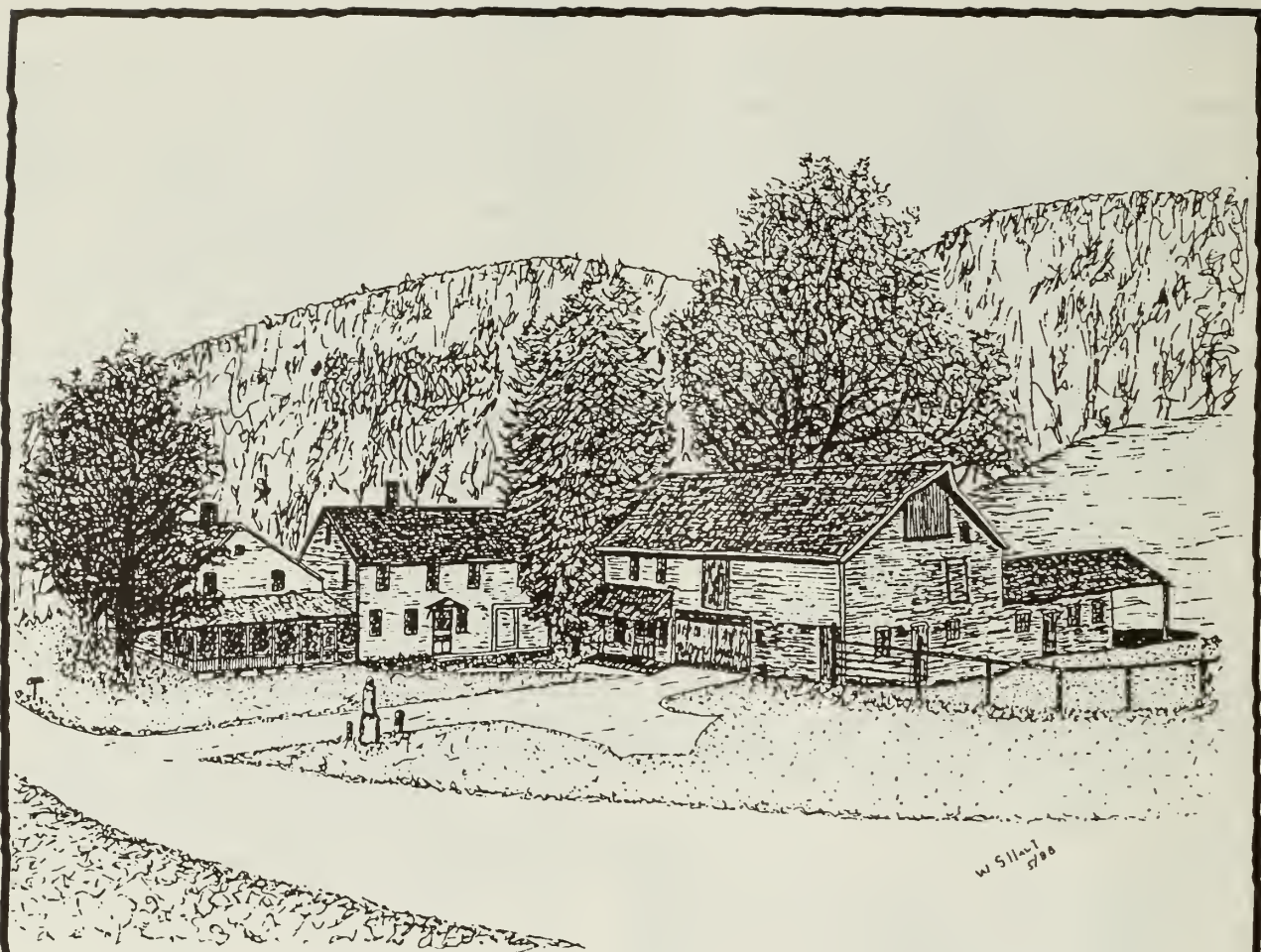
So I bid you good night hoping you are well and that you may be guided into all truth and love the Lord, prepare for a useful life, ever exerting an influence in favor of virtue, morality and religion so you may do honor to our family name. From your best earthly friend and Father.

December 15, 1873

Dear Son,

We all went to the sociable at Rev. Dickinson's. Had a good time only it was dark as a stock of black cats. There was 40 or 50 there. Fred Pease (teacher at Chester Center School) met with a sad accident. He took Rev. Dickinson's horse and buggy and went to Chester after Flora Foote (teacher in the Village) and at the first crossing below Chester, it was so dark he could not see the road, he drove down on the track and got the horse into the cattle guard. He heard the whistle and he and Flora jumped out and were all right but the horse, buggy and harness were cut to kindling wood and shoe strings. So it will cost him most of his winters wages to pay for the team.





Haying

I'm sorry for the younger folks
who never had to hay,
they'll never know the many smells
that filled a mowing day.

Misty haze in the morning sun
subdued the glistening dew
that clung to the leaves and grasses
enhancing the country view.

Swift cutting bar soon leveled all,
no more to bend and wave,
just so silently lying there
waiting to store and save.

Leather harness and horses sweat
combined in heavy scents
mixed with a hint of grease and oil
hung where the mower went.

High hayrake wheels and curving tines
combed windrows long and neat
turned by hand to a haycock high
to dry more in the heat.

Wooden wagon drawn by a team
was loaded with practiced care
then pitchforked to the silent loft
where dust beams hung in air.

W.S. Hart 3/89

BECKLEY BLAST FURNACE

By Walter Michaels, P.E.

The sketch on the cover of this magazine is of the Beckley blast furnace in East Canaan, Connecticut. Furnace Hill Road turns off from Route 44 to the Blackberry River and on its banks this relic stands as a tombstone marking the area as the final resting place of a once proud and thriving iron making industry killed by advancing technology. Further down river can be found traces of two other furnaces, one name Forbes, the other Canaan #3.

This had particular interest to me as my mother, Julia Predrizet Michaels, who was born in 1896 and at this writing is 93 years old, was brought up here starting in 1900 when her father, Alfred, went to work for the proprietors, Barnum Richardson Company.

This remaining Beckley furnace was built in 1837 by John Adam Beckley. It was destroyed by fire in 1896, rebuilt in 1898, and in use until 1918. To appreciate this crude structure we must go back to the beginning of the iron industry in these old northwestern Connecticut hills.

IRON ORE

Two miles west of Lakeville, Connecticut on the right of Route 44 is a large pond. Prior to filling with water this was the largest iron ore mine in Connecticut and was called Ore Hill. It was discovered in 1731 by John Pell and Ezekiel Ashley and was a most important find as the ore was of high grade, free from impurities, and suitable for making cannons.

Before this time there was only low quality bog ore that was only suitable for household items such as nails, hinges, latches, knives, cooking implements, etc.

Bog ore was found in ponds formed by depressions from the glaciers that once covered New England. When the ice melted, these depressions filled with water from run-

off which contained iron, in suspension, washed out of the glacial till. These tiny deposits settled on the organisms in the ponds, forming hard shells. When the creatures died the millions of shells collected in the mud and were later dredged up by a man in a boat using long handled tongs similar to those used in gathering shellfish in the ocean harbors. This collected bog ore was carried to the local blacksmith and, using his forge, was made into iron.

Ore Hill was of such superior quality and quantity that it was used from 1731 to 1923. In 1837 a Doctor Shepard reported to the Geological Society of Connecticut the amount of ore raised during the previous forty years averaged about five thousand tons annually.

In 1890 the ore was mined as far down as one hundred feet. The surrounding land is honeycombed with underground tunnels. The material was hauled up the incline that is still visible on the west side of the pond. This was dumped into a second wagon and carried to a washer where it was screened. The porous ore was broken in a stone crusher to one inch chunks then through the washer proper to be cleansed of earth and sent to the Barnum Richardson furnaces at East Canaan.

The raw ore was changed into pig iron by a smelting process incorporating limestone, charcoal, and an air blast created by water power.

LIMESTONE

Under the earth's crust in Canaan most of the rock is limestone. It was removed from many quarries in the area and used in iron making. One such quarry, a little way down the road from Beckley, is still in production.

In earlier days the limestone was blasted

from the sides of the quarry and fell to the bottom where it was loaded and then taken to be crushed into two inch chunks.

The intense heat from the burning charcoal in the furnace melts the iron from the ore. The limestone combines with some of the non-ferrous materials to form slag which has the consistency of glass. This material, being lighter, sits or floats on the much heavier molten iron at the base of the furnace.

The slag takes most of the impurities from the molten iron. When the slag builds up to the level of the nozzles where the air is blasted in it is drawn off and allowed to cool and harden. After being broken into cinders it was hauled across the present bridge and deposited. A few feet up the hill is the beginning of about eight acres of cinder piles, all from the Beckley operation.

CHARCOAL

Beyond the cinder piles and into the forest on the left is a circular, level area where wood was burned into charcoal. Although the burning was above ground these areas were called pits and were built in such a way as to form a bee hive shaped structure.

To make a pit the trees were cut, stumps removed, the ground levelled, and raked smooth. A large circle was drawn and in the center a stout, straight pole called the "vent pole" was set. This was surrounded with four foot lengths of oak, pine, chestnut, etc. set upright on the dirt until the circumference of the circle was met, then consecutively smaller circles, layer upon layer, until the top of the mound or beehive was completed.

The whole pile was then covered with leaves and then a layer of dirt mixed with dust from a previous burning. The leaves prevented the dirt from sifting down through the cordwood thus sealing the pit tightly. the vent pole was then withdrawn leaving a hole through which fire was dropped down upon kindling previously placed at the bottom of the pit.

The fire started the mass and a slow burning took fourteen or more days during which time the pit had to be carefully watched to

maintain the right temperature for charring and not burning the wood. When the heat became too high the vent hole was partially closed. If more heat was needed small holes were made at the circumference to create more draft.

From a small cabin, nearby, the collier gauged the temperature inside the pit by the quality and amount of smoke it made. The collier's work required great skill and it was considered hazardous and because of this they were more highly paid than the furnace help. If the wood started to burn instead of char the collier might have to climb the mound to stop the burning with always the danger of falling into a weakened section and into the burning pit.

The average pit charred forty cords to yield some one thousand four hundred bushels of charcoal. To cut and haul forty cords required two men and oxen working a month. This effort made about eleven tons of pig iron. Consequently Beckley consumed twenty acres of forest weekly. The voracious appetite of the furnaces for charcoal used all the trees in the nearby forests and cast a haze of smoke over the country side. In the late 1800's charcoal was brought by railroad from as far away as Maine and Virginia. A later generation would complain the woodlands were ruined by the critically needed charcoal.

I have described an average pit. Some larger ones charred up to one hundred cords at a time and could be oval, rectangular or square.

WATER POWER (BLAST)

We all know that blowing on a charcoal fire makes the coals glow and give off intense heat. Just this type fiery result was needed to get the temperature required to melt iron ore. Beckley achieved this by damming the Blackberry River and directing a "head" of water into a turbine. The spinning turbine compressed air and sent this blast through a large diameter pipe to the top of the furnace where it entered what was called an "oven." This was a small, brick room through which the blast piping was curved into "U" shapes. The

hop smoke from the stack surrounded the piping and this raised the cold blast air temperatures to 470 degrees. This now super heated air continued to the base of the furnace where it was directed from three sides into the burning charcoal. When this type heated air blast came into use in 1837 it improved iron production approximately 40%.

SMELTING

All three East Canaan furnaces were built in such a manner that the land portion adjacent to the furnace was level with the top of the stack thirty feet above the molding floor. This land area was used for sheds to store the limestone, charcoal, and ore that was to be fed into the top of the furnace. Three of the bottom arches were available to introduce the air blast into the mass and the fourth arch or hearth to draw the molten iron and remove the slag.

To load the furnace from above, a bridge was constructed about seventy-five long and level with the top of the stack. This allowed wheelbarrows to load at the storage sheds, travel over the bridge, and dump against a bump log to empty the contents into the stack.

The top man, working in the flames and acrid smoke, had the job of keeping the belching hole below properly charged with charcoal, limestone, and ore. He periodically settled the charge and checked its level with a long iron rod. This was dangerous work for a miscalculation could cause a mighty explosion resulting injury or death.

The Beckley is made of large blocks of limestone. Its base is a thirty foot square tapered to the top that rises to forty feet. The inside of the stack was lined with firebrick that has disintegrated or been vandalized through the years. The space behind this was filled with other stone as limestone could not withstand the great heat next to the layer of firebrick.

At the bottom, in the hearth, was a firebrick crucible to collect the molten iron and at the bottom of this container a tapping hole plugged with fire clay. To drain the iron the

fire clay was drilled out with a long rod to release the flow which was directed through a narrow ditch to the casting floor where damp sand had been formed in the shape of what are called "pigs" some three inches square and eighteen inches long. Samples of this pig iron can be seen in the Sloane-Stanley Museum in Kent, Connecticut.

Near the top of the crucible a cinder notch was located above the level of the molten iron and just below the blast nozzles. The slag floated on top of the liquid iron and as it accumulated it overflowed the cinder notch onto the floor where, after cooling and hardening it was broken into small chunks and taken to the cinder pile.

The Beckley blocked the cinder notch with a clay plug so the slag could be removed at timed intervals. The slag was run off twice an hour and the iron every six to eight hours.

Starting a blast furnace when it was cold (blowing in) was quite a project. The mass had to be heated slowly. The stack was filled with charcoal which was lighted at the top and then only charcoal was added until the fire burned down to the "tuyeres" where the air blast entered. With the furnace full of glowing charcoal and when the whole internal furnace had acquired a white heat the air blast was started, gently at first, and gradually increased to full strength. At the same time ore and limestone were added in increasing amounts until normal operating conditions were reached. The greatest combustion was in the lower part of the furnace. Towards the top the hot blast preheated the ore, limestone, and charcoal. To stop a furnace (blowing out) the ore and limestone were cut down and the hearth emptied of iron and slag.

The Ironmaster controlled the output by #1. his choice of ores and suitable proportions of limestone and charcoal, #2. regulating the blast temperature, and #3. changing the blast pressure. Because of the downward travel of the mixture the quickest way to change the iron grade was by blast temperature and pressure.

The rate of descent of the mass was also an important sign in furnace operation. Any irregularities indicated some sort obstruction down in the stack. Sometimes material wedged itself to form a bridge thus slowing or stopping the downward motion. If the stoppage was not too severe, starting and stopping the blast (jumping) sometimes dislodged the obstruction. If the problem was near the top often it could be broken with a long rod driven down from above.

If the foregoing methods did not break up the congested area other means had to be quickly put in place as steadily growing open space under the obstruction made the blow from its subsequent drop increasingly dangerous. At the same time if the stack temperature was not kept fairly high there was danger the blockage might cool and freeze which would mean a destruction of the hearth.

All else failing, sometimes drilling through the surrounding sidewall into the core would break it free. In later furnaces an oil fired blow pipe was inserted through the wall to melt the obstruction away. When this mass yielded there was a sudden outburst of gases at the stack head which was dangerous. In a severe plunge the fall to the hearth caused a bursting flow of red hot, molten iron and slag sometimes resulting in injury or death to the men working about it.

When the worst happened and the blockage could not be dislodged the furnace was drawn off, allowed to cool and the solid material chiseled out. The obstructions were called "salamanders or bears." In the river bed on the bank at the right side of the bridge at Beckley are examples of these.

It was a great "salamander" that plugged the Beckley in 1918 causing its shutdown. Because of the declining industry it was not financially feasible to rebuild this old reliable so it has weathered here through the years standing as a reminder of what used to be.

JULIA PREDRIZET MICHAELS

While I was gathering material for this article I drove my mother, Julia Predrizet Michaels, to the Beckley site and while wan-

dering about she talked of her memories of the place of her early upbringing. As I recall she said:

"My father worked at the iron making in France before migrating to Richmond, Massachusetts to take a job at the Richmond furnace. He was in his early twenties and Barnum Richardson Company enticed him to move to East Canaan with the promise of a house and a better job in iron making so we moved around 1900 when the furnaces were going strong."

"At the Beckley furnace, looking from the driveway to the furnace, on the front side of the arch at the ground level was the casting floor. The iron makers used sand to make the molds for the liquid iron to flow into. It was a pretty sight to see this red hot liquid flowing like water into the molds with red sparks flying as it came from the hearth."

"The iron bars were probably four inches by four or five feet long. After cooling they were removed, stacked on oxen carts to be loaded on railroad cars for shipment to the Barnum Richardson casting foundry at Limerock to be cast into railroad wheels."

"On cold winter nights, in my bed before going to sleep, I would hear the crunch, crunch, crunch of oxen feet on the cold snow going back and forth between Beckley and the other furnaces."

"The hot iron and slag drained from the larger front arch. The slag was a pretty white gray, greenish or bluish color all bubbly and running like water. The slag was taken away, when cool, to the cinder banks. My brother, George Alfred Predrizet spent many hours combing the cinders picking up small scrap pieces of iron to sell back to the furnace owners."

"My father worked at the East Canaan furnaces for many years. His paycheck was \$9.98 a week for many months. When the furnaces shut down in 1923 he went to work at the lime kilns until he retired at 73."

"I will always remember the red hot iron, the flowing hot slag, and the crunch of oxen feet in the snow."

BECKLEY STATE PARK

Good things do happen on occasion and it is most fortunate that the Connecticut Park System recognized the historical significance of this place and purchased it in 1946 and made it a State Park. It is not fenced in and

there is no admission charge. You are free to roam the works, see the remnants of the turbine pipes, and while listening to the never ending flow of the Blackberry River conjure up your own mental pictures of how hard a life these people led in order to survive and support their families.



Middlefield Street, Town Hall, Chester, Mass.

Roland Parks of Russell

By Louise Mason

I first became interested in Roland Parks when Olive Winn loaned us an old diary kept by Roland, her great-grandfather, between 1837 and 1839, early in his marriage. About that time he moved down across the Blandford line to the old Titus Doolittle farm on Moss or Morse Hill, which is now our home. The original house which Roland and his family lived in burned in the 1930's and was replaced.

Roland's obituary, published in the "Westfield Times & News-Letter" of August 10, 1892 had this to say:

"Mr. Parks was the son of Warren and grandson of Roger Parks, one of the early pioneers of Blandford. Warren Parks married Lydia Sackett, who was also a native of Blandford, and their son Roland was born in that town, Dec. 31, 1803, where he remained until the death of his father in 1835. After his marriage in 1836, to Marcia, daughter of William Culver, he settled in Russell, and for the five succeeding years devoted himself to farming. In 1842 he was appointed station agent for the Western, now Boston & Albany railroad, being the first agent at the Russell Station. This position he retained until 1851, after which for two years, he was deputy sheriff and jailer for the county. During Franklin Pierce's administration he was connected with the Boston Custom House, where he remained four years as inspector. He has kept store at Russell at different times from 1843 to 1867. Mr. Parks cast his first vote for President for Andrew Jackson in 1825 and has always been a staunch democrat. He has several times served in the Legislature, occupying a seat therein, in the years 1841, 1851 and 1864, during which periods he was member of many important committees. He was justice of the

peace for a number of years; was from 1873 to 1877, special county commissioner, and has also been postmaster. He was town clerk in 1845-7 and 1861-5, and selectman for nine years. When the railroad company changed their track at Russell depot, he was instrumental in procuring the handsome iron bridge which spans the river. Though retired from business for many years he has been active in whatever concerned the welfare of the town, even up to the day when he was so suddenly stricken. Mr. Parks outlived his wife and also his only child, Olive Celestia, who was the wife of Jarvis W. Gibbs of Russell."

"The funeral service was held Sunday afternoon in the Methodist Church, prayers having been offered at the house. There was a very large attendance, the church being more than filled with friends and relatives from Russell and the surrounding towns. The burial was in Russell."

"The character of Roland Parks was as firmly established as the everlasting hills among which he so long and usefully lived. He was honored and respected by all who knew him. He was characterized by great plainness of speech. He had no difficulty making himself understood. He never beat around the bush, but always came directly to the point. He had opinions and expressed them, sometimes forcibly. He was open hearted and open handed, kind and generous to a fault. He had no patience with hypocrisy, and hated shams and pretenders. He despised a mean man and a mean act, and stood up for what he thought was right with all the strength of his manly character. Although well advanced in years he kept young in spirit, and did not fall a whit behind the procession in the world's progress."



Roland Parks

In addition to the above information there is an article on Roland in the Hampden County Biographical Review, written while he was still alive. It states that he married Marcia Culver, daughter of William and Rhoda of Blandford June 25, 1836, and that Marcia was born in Chester, June 14, 1807. Their only child, Olive Celestia, was born May 2, 1837 (during the period covered by the diary).

Olive Winn states that his nearest living relatives at the time of his death were his sister, Lavina (Parks) Culver Parks and his granddaughter, Mary T. Gibbs, his wife having died in 1886. Mary Tryphena remembered that her grandfather neither smoked or drank, but was not above using a little strong

language when expressing himself, and he was quite a talker, especially when it came to politics. She also said he was quite agile, though rather short and stocky. On the occasion of his eightieth birthday he was given a party, where he distinguished himself by leaping in the air, clapping his heels together three times before he came down. Upon repeating this again he was greatly applauded.

Much interesting information can be gleaned from his diary for the calendar years 1837, 1838 and part of 1839. Most important to a farmer was the weather, of course. Everything else took second place. He operated a saw mill, collected the maple sap, carted a wagon load of sawn boards to Springfield, planted corn, oats, potatoes, and took the census. He played baseball frequently, often going to nearby towns such as Chester Village (Huntington) for this sport. He worked on the roads when necessary with other townsmen, worked on tax valuations, mended fence, helped raise barns and houses, mowed hay in summer and harvested his crops in the fall. He bought and sold cattle, traveled to Springfield for militia training, helped build and repair bridges, dug 210 bushels of potatoes, picked and sold apples and peaches, and traveled to Northampton to the cattle show. Roland went hunting often, ploughed the fields, attended town meetings, and doctored sick cattle. He attended auctions, took part in turkey shoots and shooting matches, and went fox hunting on Mt. Shattarack. He attended weddings and funerals, hunted wolves in Granville and killed one. In winter he traveled by sleigh whenever possible, and broke out roads, often bucking drifts six to eight feet high. He fished in Russell Pond, sowed wheat, went to Westfield after cart wheels, carted five loads of dung, replanted the corn where the geese had dug it up, hoed corn, and helped his brother-in-law, Horace Culver, fix and shingle his shed. He rode to Blandford to borrow and later return a scythe, carried corn to the mill to be ground, and drove his wagon to Cabotville, Blandford and Springfield to sell cheese. Roland hunted bees on Mt. Shat-



Marcia Culver Parks

tarack, picked and husked corn, and attended a convention in Springfield as well as selling butter and apples there. He went to church, hunted squirrels, made cider, rode to Middlefield, Montgomery, Worthington to buy and sell cattle, drew logs out of the woods up on Pine Hill to be sawn into boards for a barn, and butchered hogs. Strangely enough he never mentioned the birth of his daughter, Olive Celestia, in his entry for May 2, 1837, the day of her birth. Neither is there any mention of his wife or of any holiday celebrations for Thanksgiving or Christmas—just weather as usual. A second daughter was born in 1847

but lived just 2 months.

Roland's life as a farmer was hard and subject to the vagaries of the weather. He both worked and played hard, and certainly was never isolated on his country farm. He seems to have traveled around this area nearly as much as we do. Roland Parks had very little formal education, but could write and express himself eloquently. He developed into a man of considerable influence in Russell, Hampden County, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Childhood Farm Memories

By Shirley Alger Kaminski

My eagerly anticipated visits to my grandparents' farm would begin with the farm collie dog, 'Tippie', racing off the farmhouse porch towards our car before we even had time to turn into the farmhouse driveway. My parents would comment that "that dog must recognize our car's particular sound." Tippie would wriggle frantically, greeting us while licking my hands.

The double-dutch front door would swing open and my smiling grandmother would welcome us with open arms. Stepping through that wide doorway was entering a "dream world" for this young child. The music room, featuring so many types of instruments, was to the right and the library was to the left. I would leaf through the National Geographic Magazines and read Thornton Burgess books while the adults visited, if on a rainy day. A wide staircase swept up to the bedrooms and my grandmother's sewing room. As we followed my grandmother down the foyer into the large living room, family ancestors gazed down from the walls. A padded windowseat in the living room was a favorite spot of mine where I could see the barns and other outbuildings.

A children's toy closet held a treasure of puzzles and games. It was located just before you entered the huge farmhouse kitchen from the living room. Numerous cupboards and working areas lined the kitchen walls. In one corner of the kitchen, by a window, was a sink with a mirror next to it for my grandfather to wash up and comb his hair before sitting down to breakfast or lunch. Dinner was served in the dining room. On the corner shelf over the sink was a golden oak pendulum clock.

The huge black soapstone sink was banded in brass. I would climb into it and scrub it for my grandmother while singing her favorite song: "In the Garden".

The formal dining room, featuring delicate crystal and china, was located off the kitchen behind you as you stood at the sink. A door led out onto the front porch, another into the library, and one into my grandfather's office—all from the dining room.

The back door led out of the kitchen onto a large irregularly-shaped porch, housing the "cold pantry". Several rocking chairs out there were put to good use after supper when the farm day's activities were discussed—so interesting to a little city girl. During the day, I would churn butter for my grandmother as she would sit with a large pan in her aproned lap peeling vegetables or fruit or kneading bread. We would watch the workers going in and out of the classic red New England barn into the stables and the potato and onion storage areas and the grain bins. You could hear the bleating of the sheep from out behind the barn.

I found the unharnessing of "Dan" and "Bess", the horse team, particularly interesting. Having Bob Thayer, the hired man, always with a piece of hay hanging out of the corner of his mouth, pitch me up onto the plowhorse's back was a thrill. I would ride proudly tall while grasping the two brass knobs on the horse's collar.

Sleighriding during the Christmas season and listening to the snow-muffled hoofbeats, with the ringing of the sleighbells, is a special memory.

The neighboring farm children and I would explore the barn—sometimes balancing our bodies with arms outstretched and walking across the ten inch wide wooden barn beams with the cement floor and the barn in-the-floor scales far below. Jumping into the hayloft, and then down the long chute where Bob pitched hay for the stables below was great sport! Whoever heard of hayfever?



Watching Bob milk the cows and squirting the milk into the opened mouths of the patiently waiting farm cats was another treat. He could hit a cat's mouth from a distance of ten feet!

Out in the onion storage building, near the creek, we would climb up the sides of the stacked onion crates in that cool storehouse. One day, I pulled on a hanging rope, in the semi-dark building, and the floor gave way suddenly beneath me—I was on an elevator! As it slowly ground downwards, I was one frightened little girl. My playmates were calling and calling for me and I couldn't answer. It took awhile to *digest* that adventure.

Whenever I noticed a suddenly slim farm cat, I would follow her quietly back into the haybarn to see her disappear into a hole in the hay. Carefully putting my hand into the

opening, I would stroke the newborn kittens—never taking them out of their darkened nest until they were nine days old and their eyes were opened. How I enjoyed playing with the kittens in that fragrant hay with the mama cat purring close by.

Rubbing the cows' foreheads as they stood in their stanchions, was a special experience—as was pushing the mouthpiece in their watering cups to fill them for these gentle, brown-eyed creatures. Another game was to allow the calves to suck my fingers.

My grandfather took me riding in the wagon when he delivered milk. He would let me hold the reins and tell the farmwives that his companion was his first grandchild, Shirley, who was visiting the farm "ALL the way from Westfield." My!

My grandmother would read me a bedtime story in front of the large stone fireplace every night. Under the deep, picture-laden mantle was an imbedded starburst of Indian arrowheads. These arrowheads had been found by my grandfather as a young man when he plowed the fields--remnants of King Phillip's War. His favorite, a black arrowhead, was encased in gold and was worn on his gold watch chain when he dressed for church, weddings, and funerals. I remember standing between my grandparents in church and playing with that arrowhead during the hymn singing.

My grandmother was a superb cook. Her bread or rolls or biscuits or cookies, jams or preserves were a delight at the daily four o'clock tea, where hand-edged tiny napkins lay graciously in our laps. She taught me to knit.

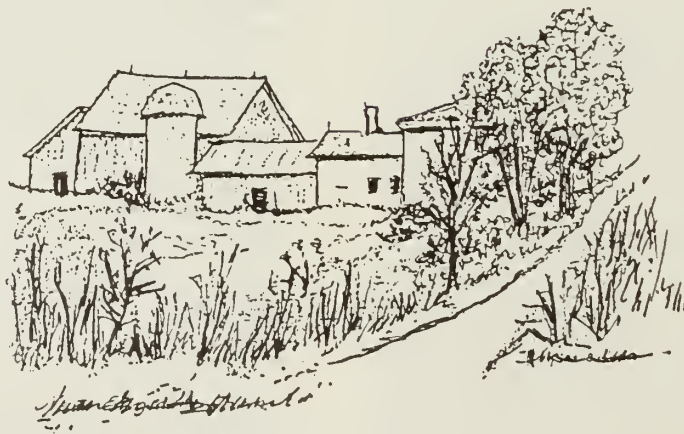
Broadleaf (cut) tobacco and shade (picked by hand) tobacco were harvested during July, August, and part of September to be hung and cured in the numerous tobacco barns featuring long, narrow, opened shutters.

The pride of Grandfather's farm was his wide-backed South-down sheep which he raised for show all over New England. Numerous engraved shining silver cups and

blue ribbons graced the wall shelves in his office and the plate rail in the dining room. My grandfather and Uncle Luther had to make frequent visits to the sheep barn during the lambing season to check the ewes because they are prone to difficulty in lambing. I would run out to the chilly barn early in the morning to count the new lambs born during the night. They would be standing close to their mothers and separated from the rest of the flock in their own pens. What can surpass the face of a lamb looking up at you?

My grandfather's death was my first family death. To see my beloved grandfather lying in his coffin in the music room, with black velvet drapes behind and to the sides of him, was an extreme shock to me. He had been in the barn getting some grain for his sheep when he had dropped dead--just after finishing a conversation with my Uncle Luther. What better place?

I sat sadly upstairs by my grandmother during the funeral services and we comforted one another. As the service was ending and we were preparing to walk behind the hearse to the family cemetery plot, my grandmother reached over for my hand and placed the gold-encased black Indian arrowhead in it.



RAMBLINS

Fifty Years From Now

By William S. Hart

I would be interested to know whether, fifty years from now, the youth of today will look back at these times and wish to return to them. The passage of years will put them in their sixties and most will be in the roll of grandparents.

Will they think of this era of noise and air and water pollution with happiness and nostalgia? Will they recall the bumper-to-bumper traffic as relaxing? Will the stench of exhaust fumes and the cesspools of our streams be looked back on with pride?

Perhaps the thoughts of monotonous, ear-splitting power mowers, the drone of air conditioners, the grinding of disposals, the roar of powerful motorcycles, the uncontrolled shouting of too many children will be things to look back to as being romantic.

I'm sure the utter despair of the ghettos with their accompanying poverty, crime and unemployment will influence their thinking. Maybe the drug culture and sexual freedom will be called the "good old days".

Unfortunately these people will not have the charm and peace of mind of the twenties and thirties to recall for comfort. There will be the common denominator of love, marriage, birth, death, taxes, employment and God but the basic mechanics of everyday living will have changed.

They will not remember the soft stretch of the spring on the screen door or the buzzing of flies in the back hall before they were trapped by the sticky flypaper. They will not think of the pleasant whirr of a well-oiled, hand pushed lawnmower or the rhythmic idle of a 1928 Model A Ford.

Right now, at this instant, do you remember: The clip-clop of the milkman's horse, the sound of the ice pick on the twenty pound block of ice and the drip of the melted water collecting in the pan under the old wooden

box, the Bissell carpet sweeper being pushed back and forth, handbeating the carpets thrown over the clothesline, the anticipation of taste while turning the crank on the ice cream churn as the cracked ice was being thawed by the rock salt, a rooster crowing at daybreak, a sprinkling truck watering the streets, a trolley bell, a steamtrain sound in the night, the thrill of an excursion boat ride, the big name bands coming to the city, sheet music at the "five and ten" where a woman played it on the piano before you bought it, going into the booth at the phonograph store to try a record to see if you liked it, flagroot candy, dandelion greens with vinegar, the wonder of a crystal set where the sound was pulled right out of the air into your ear-phones, riding on the top of a load of hay, driving the one horse hayrake, trying to back a wagon into a barn with a team of horses, the knack of weaning a calf from its mother to a pail, collecting eggs warm from the hen, cider made from your own apples, the warm and pleasant noises of a cow barn in winter, hearing the horses stomping their hooves on the wooden floors of the stalls, the smell of Flit being sprayed in the barn to keep down the flies, milking by hand instead of a machine, swimming by the dam at the grist mill and not in a cement pool, splitting wood in the shed to be used in the iron stove in the kitchen, the soft springy ride of a buggy, cutting ice on the pond and storing it in sawdust, pumping an old reed organ or singing to the melody on the rolls of the player piano, shooting off fireworks such as cherry bombs, lady fingers, three inchers, roman candles, pinwheels and sky rockets, movie serials at the Saturday matinee, free dish night, amateur night and sing-alongs to the rhythm of the bouncing ball at the local movie house, pride in our flag, respect for presidents, collecting bottle caps,

match covers and pictures of movie stars, chopping through the ice at the water trough, cars with no heaters or radios, clapping the erasers at school, the dip pen and ink well instead of a ballpoint, setting pans in the pantry to let the cream rise, trousers with buttons to attach the suspenders, the sound of corduroy knickers, taffy pulls, spin the bottle, post office, priming the pump, the dollar Ingersol pocket watch with fob, being snow-bound for days, cod liver oil?

Remember you weren't allowed to drink "coke" because it was habit forming but Moxie was all right? How about riding an open air trolley out to the country, having a shore dinner by Long Island sound when the shell-fish were native and edible?

I'm so happy to look back on evenings lighted by kerosene lamps with their different colored shades, of real ice tea instead of

the powdered kind, of fresh, clean water from a driven well.

It's foolish to think fruits and vegetables taste better from a mason jar than those in cans or frozen, that home-made root beer is superior to the commercial type.

I'm sorry but I'll take the memories of my youth and once again walk barefooted down a country lane and feel the fine dust squish up between my toes. The brooks were clean and the trout were not liver fed by the state fish hatchery.

The present generation is smarter than I and will greatly surpass me in worldly goods but I don't feel they'll have the rich, wholesome, happy memories of a great time in our nation's history as we changed from a rural, pastoral way of life to that of being city oriented and a stranger among men.



Joy to, and from, the Little Swallow

Weather permitting, it is my custom to dry my hair outdoors in the healing sunshine, relaxing and watching our bird and animal neighbors within view.

On a brilliant afternoon, my attention was drawn to the unusual flight-activities of a young Barn Swallow. It flew up into the air about the height of the barn, dropped something from its bill, swooped down rapidly, catching the object in mid-air, but from beneath it; then the bird flew up again to its former height, dropped the object and swooped underneath it to retrieve it. The joyous performance was enacted at least six times as I sat spell-bound, eyes rivited on the tiny bird.

When it finally dropped its "play-toy" and flew off, I hurried to the spot where the object had fallen. Surprise, marvel and a whispered "God bless you, tiny joy-bringer", were my reaction. The "toy" which that ingenuous little fellow found pleasure with was a tuft of our Keeshond's coat of hair!

That breed of dog has two coats; a waxy, woolly one close to the body, then the salt and pepper colored outer hair. The playful bird had a bit of both coats, giving its "toy" the proper consistency for its buoyancy.

I am deeply grateful to have been granted the opportunity to share in the joy of that happy Swallow!

Helen Scott

HOW CHESTER CARED FOR ITS POOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

By Lucy Conant

Today with our concern for the homeless and hungry people living in our affluent society, we may forget that in the "good old days" there were also homeless and hungry people even in our small hill towns. It was expected that families would look after their own family members who were unable to care for themselves. Of course, in many instances this was the case, but even so the care of paupers was a major cost to the towns one hundred years ago. There were no state or federal assistance programs, and so whatever services were provided came from the local community.

The town selectmen were usually also the overseers of the poor. Town reports of the late 1800's give an interesting and detailed account of the services provided and what they cost. There was no confidentiality whatsoever, as names were explicitly listed, but in reality everyone in town probably knew who was receiving what kinds of help anyway. Every town was expected to look after its own, and each year bills would be sent to the town of which a person might be a resident for the services another town had to provide. There must have been some major hassles over who was or was not a resident of what town. The state assumed responsibility only for alien paupers.

In addition, towns that had railroads or highways passing through their boundaries had a major problem in caring for the tramps or transient paupers as they were sometimes called. It was a common practice to give them a meal and expect them to move on somewhere else. In a town like Chester which was on the railroad, care of tramps was a major undertaking. In 1876, Eli A. Knox was paid to take care of the town hall, the schoolrooms in

the village and the tramps. He was reimbursed for feeding 125 tramps at twenty cents each and 542 tramps at fifteen cents each. In addition, he paid sixty cents railroad fare for three tramps. \$13.26 in railroad fares were paid by other town officials for these transients. After deducting receipts from the state and other towns, Chester spent \$1,345 on paupers that year, of which about ten percent was spent on tramps traveling the railroad. This was at a time when teachers in the one room schools received five to six dollars per week, and a total of \$2,449 was spent on highways for the entire year.

One can't help but wonder at the tragic details behind the factual outlines in these town reports. David Crow was paid for the care of Melissa S. for five years in the late 1870's. In addition in 1877 Dr. J.N. Dickson was paid \$8.50 for her medical care, and Keefe Bros. were paid \$6.12 in goods, undoubtedly clothing, for her. The town continued to pay for her care until 1879 when the last notation was made.

Also, in 1877, the Chester Town Report states that Henry Higgins was paid \$25.00 for the care of J.B., O.R. Foster paid \$20.00 for "watching" with J.B., and then finally William Fay was paid \$11.40 to provide his coffin. That same year Eli Knox was paid \$67.05 for the feeding of 555 tramps.

Entire families sometimes received aid over a number of years. A.S. Cone, a selectman, was paid \$43.27 for the support of S.J. and his family in the 1877 Town Report. The following year a number of services were provided this family, including support, provisions, flour and meal, medical care, and \$1.25 to J.H. Fisk for digging a grave for S.J.'s child while William Fay was paid \$5.50 for a

coffin. Provisions, lumber and firewood totaling \$134.36 were provided in the next year. Supplies and goods amounting to \$27.32 were given in 1879. In the 1885 Report, this same family received \$82.64 in assistance, including \$39.30 for medical care. The next year's Report stated that \$6.00 of firewood was provided to Mrs. J. and \$10.00 was paid Dr. H.E. Wilson for medical care to a child.

After a separate Board of Overseers to the Poor was appointed in 1880, the Chester Town Reports tend to become somewhat less detailed. But still the human tragedies continue. Alpheus Wilcutt was paid \$7.00 in 1880 for expenses to "bind out" Willie C. at Northampton, and William Connolly was reimbursed \$10.50 for clothes for Willie. Tramps passing through town sometimes became ill, needed medical care and on occasion died. Also, accidents happened as in the 1892 Report which tersely reported, "Man killed by the cars. Burial \$12.00"

In the 1889 Report under the heading "Persons Aided Not Belonging to Chester" is the stark outline of a family tragedy. The Town paid for supplies and wood for the H.A. family, but then Seagers and Parker were paid \$26.00 for three coffins for children, C.H. Knox was repaid for \$2.00 furnished to bury one child and M.A. Snow was paid \$6.00 for providing "team to carry remains of two to Westfield." What happened to this poor family is unknown, but in this instance the town expected to be reimbursed by the state, a relatively rare event.

Then there was the sad story of the P. family, first recorded in 1885, when J.W. Bemis was paid \$65.10 for board and clothing of Charles P. while Amos Cone was paid \$22.00 for board of a P. child. After reporting the expenditure of \$1.75 for a child's boots, it is matter of factly recorded "Paid town of Westfield, burial of P. child, \$9.00." But there was at least another child, as two people were paid for board and clothing for a child, while others were paid for the board of Joseph P. who also received \$10.00 for medical care. Then in the 1889 Report it is reported that Westfield was paid \$104.00 for the care,

medical attendance and burial of Joseph P. Meanwhile, for the past two years funds had been provided for the board of George P. In 1889-1900 the Town paid \$131.08 for George's board, clothing and medical care, with the last notation being made the following year for George's board and travel to Springfield.

The W. family was another family who received Town assistance for many years. In 1876 William W. was provided medical care amounting to \$6.00. The following year \$3.50 in potatoes was provided, also \$5.00 for medical assistance, and \$3.00 paid to dig the grave for Mrs. W., while William Fay received \$14.40 for her burial. In 1879 William W. obtained \$9.50 worth of flour paid by the Town. Then in 1885 the W. family received \$6.00 in cash, \$20.00 for rent of house and land, \$36.10 to Dr. H.A. Fiske for medical care, \$8.40 for food, and \$88.33 paid to Timothy Keefe for supplies and clothing. This totaled \$158.83 in assistance. Their misfortunes continued the following year, and evidently there was a fire, as Edwin Rogers was paid \$5.00 for care of the family "after fire." \$54.55 was paid for medical care, and all told the Town of Chester paid a total of \$236.69 to maintain this family for the year. In 1887 the Town again paid rent for a house, firewood, \$142.87 for supplies and clothing, money for provisions and medical attendance. Also, Mrs. Samuel Duniken was paid \$10.00 for labor and care. What did this mean? C.H. Knox was paid \$2.54 for the expense of George and Joseph to Boston. Did this mean that the two boys were being sent somewhere in Boston? The following year a total of \$40.56 was spent on supplies, rent and medical care for the W. family, while in 1889 this assistance totaled \$71.41. Rent, supplies and medical care continued to be provided every year through 1893. What happened afterwards is unknown.

Then there was the story of Mr. and Mrs. J. They evidently owned property but lacked financial resources. In 1887, a year or two after they began to receive Town assistance, Mrs. J. "... deeded her place to the Town for her support." The Town paid for provisions,

clothing, medical care and firewood for the couple until Edmund died in 1892 and then continued to provide for Mrs. J. This was the only instance found in the Chester Town Reports of the period whereby people having real estate could deed it to the Town in exchange for care.

During the 1890's increased use of state facilities was reported but the Town was still responsible for reimbursing the state for care of its residents. For example, in 1892 the Town paid \$169.92 to the Massachusetts School for the Feeble Minded for the board of

one person and a total of \$274.84 to the Northampton Lunatic Hospital for the care of two people.

Welfare costs continued to be an unrelenting burden to this small town. In 1896 Chester spent \$2,188.79 on the care of paupers while spending \$2,632.32 for the care of highways (excluding bridges) and \$3,332.17 on schools. The burden of paying for welfare led the community finally to decide to establish a Poor Farm. What happened to this venture will be presented in a future issue of Stone Walls.



Genealogical Queries

Compiled by Grace Wheeler

Hannah Howd - born about 1816 at Tolland, Ma., daughter of Jowl and Lydia(?) Howd. Looking for dates of birth, marriages etc., also names of parents. Joel and Lydia died around 1860, and are both buried in Tolland, Ma.

Abijah Hazard was born 1774 at South Kingston R.I. He died Nov. 14, 1845 at Otis, Ma. Married first January 9, 1797, Elizabeth Crowney, married second Sally(?) and third Eunice Tanner. Looking for dates, births, marriages, etc., also names of Abijah's parents.

David Haskell born 1813 at Barkhamsted, Ct., married Elvira(?), had children George W. John Henry born 1846, and Lucy born 1851 at Otis, Ma. Need dates, births, marriages, deaths, etc. on any family members. Also need names of David's parents.

Mrs. C.M. Bardwell
Box 24
Whately, Ma. 01093

Would like information on Bernie family who were living in Becket, Ma. about 1839. Ann Bernie married William Leman, would also like information on William.

Mrs. Kenneth Wells
Frost Rd.
Washington, Ma. 01223

Would like to hear from any one who may have been related to William's family of Middle Farms section of Westfield. Park Williams married Naomi(?) and they had children Maria who married Cordon Johnson, Horace who died young, Charlotte who married Elisha Allen of Westfield. Harvey who married Eunice Whitman of Montgomery, Naomi who married Oliver Hanchett, Rebecca who married Abner Clapp, and Park who married Sarah(?) from Vt. Interested in all of these families.

Grace Wheeler
430 Worthington Rd.
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Country Journal

*A Weekly Publication
"Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns"*

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*Serpents in stone, they wind o'er hill and dell
Mid orchards long deserted, fields ubshorn,
The crumbling fragments resting where they fell
Forgotten, worthless to a race new-born.*

"An American Stonehenge",
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